



Rare Plants of Louisiana



Xyris scabrifolia – Harper's yellow-eyed grass Yellow-eyed grass family (Xyridaceae)

Rarity Ranks: S2/G3

Range: Coastal Plain from North Carolina west to Texas

Recognition:

- 1) General *Xyris* form: plants with basally disposed, grass-like or iris-like leaves with a single stem bearing a terminal cone-like spike inflorescence; flowers have three yellow petals protruding from behind cone scales
- 2) Plants occur singly or in small clumps, NOT a dense clump-forming species
- 3) Leaves and stem obviously twisted
- 4) Leaves scabrous (= “roughened”) throughout, thus having a “glazed” appearance when held up to light
- 5) Lateral sepal margins appear torn (= lacerate) and approach fimbriate (= having narrow filiform appendages) (see illustration below)
- 6) Plant bases appear bulbous or slightly bulbous and leaf bases pinkish/purplish (see image below)
- 7) Flower petals nearly round, about 5 mm long; flowers opening in the morning
- 8) Seeds translucent (as opposed to opaque and covered with a whitish mealy substance)



Xyris scabrifolia
Beauregard Parish
Photo by Larry Allain

Flowering time: Summer - Fall

Light Requirement: Full sun – part shade

Wetland Indicator Status: OBL – almost always occurs in wetlands

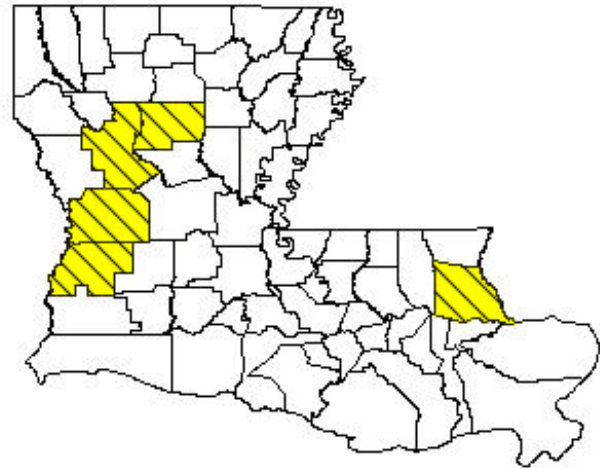
Habitat: Hillside seepage bogs, in full sun or in shade of adjacent seepage forest, often growing among clumps of living *Sphagnum* (peat moss).

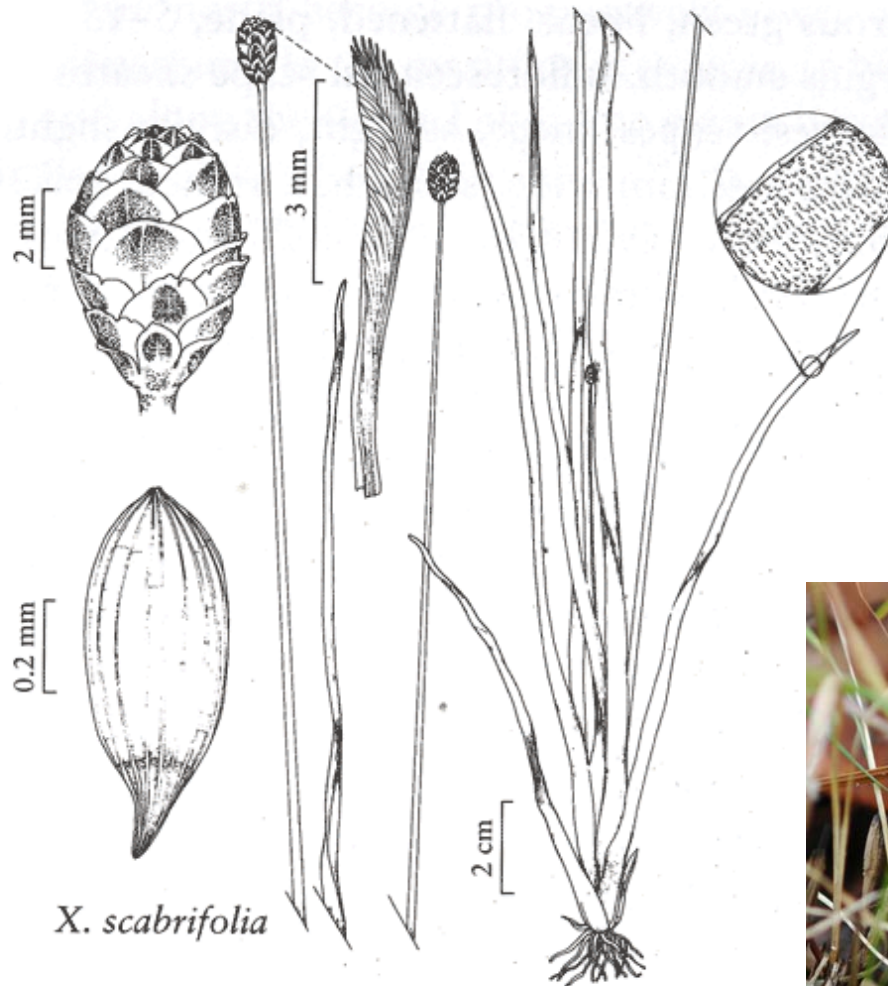
Threats:

- 1) Fire exclusion
- 2) Conversion of habitat to other forest types
- 3) Alterations in groundwater hydrology

Beneficial management practices:

- 1) Thinning and maintaining relatively low basal area in upland woodlands adjacent to hillside seepage bogs
- 2) Prescribed burning, particularly during the growing season (May-June is best); do NOT place fire lines along small streams where hillside seepage bogs may occur – this can either directly disturb a bog or cut it off from fire





X. scabrifolia

X. scabrifolia from The Flora of North America, Volume 22. Copyright © 2000 Flora of North America Association.



Xyris scabrifolia leaf base
Beauregard Parish
Photo by Larry Allain



Xyris scabrifolia base
Beauregard Parish
Photo by Larry Allain

References:

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